

REMARKS

In paragraph 2 of the final Action, claims 1-3 and 8-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Abe.

In view of the rejection, claim 1 has been amended to incorporate therein the subject matter of claims 13-16. Claims 2, 3, 11, 12 and 17 have been canceled. The amendment does not introduce new issue. If, however, it is deemed that claims 8-10 depending from claim 1 introduce new issue, claims 8-10 will be cancelled.

In the amendment, it is now clearly recited in claim 1 (former claim 16) that each of the second connections has a substantially U-shape with one side extending vertically and two other sides extending laterally parallel to an upper side and a lower side of the front panel and the rear panel, the vertically extending sides face each other at the middle portion of the front panel and the rear panel in the lateral direction, and a space between the vertically extending sides defines one duct.

In paragraph 2 of the final Action, it was held that "As seen in Fig. 7, connections 64 made substantially U-shapes extending vertically."

However, the Examiner's opinion is not correct. In this respect, it is explained at column 6, lines 52-60 of Abe that:

"That is, the first chamber 61 is formed in an H-shape turned laterally. Second chambers 62 are arranged at both the left and right sides of the middle portion (61a) of the first chamber 61 such that each second chamber 62 extends vertically. Third chambers 63 are formed between the second chamber 62 and the left and right side edges of the airbag 60. The second chambers 62 communicate with the first chamber 61(61a) through gas inlets 65."

Namely, the inlets 65 are formed at the middle between the upper and lower portions of the first chamber 61, so that the gas is supplied to the second and third chambers 62, 63 through the inlets 65.

In claim 1 of the invention, each of the second connections has a substantially U-shape with one side extending vertically, and the vertically extending sides face each other at the middle portion of the front panel and the rear panel in the lateral direction.

In Abe, the inlet 65 is relatively wide for providing the gas to the second and third chambers 62, 63. Therefore, the connections for surrounding the second and third chambers 62, 63 do not have the U-shape.

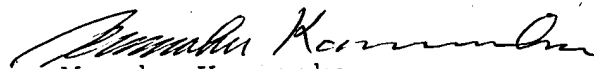
In the invention, the first and second chambers are connected by the duct in the middle thereof, and the gas from the inflator is not supplied to the middle area of the airbag except for the duct. Thus, the capacity of the airbag is made small, so that the low capacity inflator can be used. Accordingly, the airbag system can be manufactured at a relatively low cost.

Abe does not disclose the features now claimed in claim 1. The structure of claim 1 now clearly defined is not anticipated by Abe.

Claims now pending in the application are patentable over Abe. Reconsideration and allowance are earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

HAUPTMAN KANESAKA BERNER Patent Agents, LLP



Manabu Kanesaka

Registration No. 31,467

1700 Diagonal Road, Suite 310
Alexandria, Virginia 22314
(703) 519-9785 MAN/yok